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Fifth Spy Suspect Still Unidentified

Concern Mounts Over Possible Damage to U.S. Security

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An FBI agent in San Francisco said yesterday that authorities have not yet identified a fifth person who may be implicated in an alleged Soviet spy ring, as concern mounted about the scope of possible damage to national security over the last 20 years.

"That person is unidentified . . . We do not know where he is or who he is," FBI spokesman John Holford said.

Four former or current Navy men have been arrested on espionage charges. An FBI affidavit supporting the arrest Monday of the fourth man, retired senior chief radioman Jerry Alfred Whitworth, indicated that a fifth person, identified only as "F," may also be implicated in passing defense secrets to the Soviet Union.

In an effort to identify "F" and others who may be involved in the case, FBI agents continued to sift yesterday through mounds of classified documents and other papers seized in searches of the homes and possessions of the four arrested men.

Military analysts, meanwhile, said that Whitworth had access to information with potential to cause at least as much damage to national security as that known by John Anthony Walker Jr., the alleged ring-leader.

Walker, a retired chief warrant officer, and his son, Navy Seaman Michael Lance Walker, pleaded not guilty to espionage charges yesterday in federal court in Baltimore.

A federal grand jury indicted John and Michael Walker last week on six counts of espionage in what officials say may be the most serious case of espionage in Navy history. According to a federal affidavit, some of the participants may have begun the alleged conspiracy as long ago as 1965.

John Walker's brother, retired Navy lieutenant commander Arthur James Walker, also has been arrested

and charged with funneling sensitive information to the Soviets.

Judge Alexander Harvey II yesterday issued an order barring FBI Assistant Director Bill Baker from releasing any information about a wide range of subjects, including the identity and testimony of potential witnesses and "any opinion as to the guilt or innocence" of the men.

"The order came in response to a motion by John Walker's lawyer, federal public defender Fred Warren Bennett, charging that Baker had jeopardized chances of a fair trial in interviews with The Washington Post and other newspapers and describing Baker as a "loose cannon on the deck."

"Whitworth's alleged espionage could be very damaging, military analysts said, because he was in the Navy until recently, retiring in 1983, and he held the position of chief radioman. In that post, they said, Whitworth would have access to a wide variety of communications transmitted throughout the Pacific as well as technical information about the inner workings of communications and code machinery.

The information about fleet movements in the Pacific, they said, could dovetail with information that may have been provided by John and Arthur Walker about Atlantic operations and submarine tactics.

"Communication is the 'heart and soul' of military operations, and Whitworth's position would make him 'a dream agent' for the Soviets, said retired Rear Adm. Eugene Carroll.

He said Whitworth would have had a "high degree of technical knowledge" about the working of communications gear, including su-

per-sophisticated coding devices. "That's the really hot stuff," said Carroll, deputy director of the Center for Defense Information, a policy group frequently critical of the military.

A high-ranking military source said yesterday of Whitworth's possible value as a spy, "The more recent it is, the more potentially worrisome it might be."

John Walker retired from the Navy in 1976 after a 21-year-career, mostly in communications. Whitworth retired in October 1983 after serving 23 years.

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.), the ranking minority member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said he thought the charge against Whitworth is a "very serious" development because it "reflects the fact that the Soviets have substantially increased their activities on the West Coast" in recent years.

"The most troublesome thing is that they got away with it for so long, and I think the Navy procedures were extraordinarily lax," Leahy said.

The Pentagon's top spokesman said yesterday that for the last three years military officials have been studying ways to tighten rules for awarding security clearances. More than 4.3 million people have access to government secrets, a sharp increase over the 3 million who had clearances in 1979, Michael I. Burch said at a briefing for reporters.

Burch said he does not know whether any of the Walkers or Whitworth had faced follow-up security investigations, which are supposed to be made every five years—a schedule not always followed.

Whitworth's access to potentially damaging information was greatest

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in his position as communications watch officer aboard the USS Enterprise from November 1982 until his retirement in October 1983, and as a radioman at the Alameda Naval Air Station near Oakland from September 1979 to September 1982, analysts said.

Aboard the Enterprise, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier widely reported to be carrying nuclear weapons, Whitworth "would have access to almost everything" transmitted into and out of the ship, said James Bamford, a civilian author and expert on intelligence communications. Bamford said Whitworth's access to sensitive information at Alameda was "really serious. If I was the Russians and I wanted to put somebody someplace, that would be it."

According to an FBI affidavit, Whitworth's duties included being the custodian of classified materials and an officer in charge of communications security. The affidavit also quoted from a Whitworth letter, seized in a court-ordered search, saying that he worked at "the heart of naval communications."

At the arraignment yesterday morning, Michael Walker, wearing a short-sleeved cotton madras shirt, blue jeans and sneakers, exchanged smiles with his wife, Rachel, who was surrounded by reporters in the packed courtroom. His father, smiling broadly as he entered and left the courtroom, was also dressed casually, in a knit shirt and slacks.

John Walker appeared calm, answering the judge's questions in a clear voice. Michael Walker rocked back and forth on his feet as he stood before the bench and looked nervously around the packed courtroom.

The judge did not set a trial date, but assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Schatzow said he expected the case to come to trial in September. Both father and son are being held without bail.

Also in the courtroom were John Walker's 27-year-old daughter, Margaret Walker, an artist in Norfolk, and Laurie Robinson, his partner in his Norfolk private detective firm. Both met with John Walker briefly after the hearing.

"We're feeling optimistic," said Margaret Walker, who talked to reporters outside the courthouse. She said she was shocked by the charges against her father.

"They are serious charges," she said. "To prove the man is guilty you have to wait until the trial."

In response to questions about whether members of Confidential Reports Inc., Walker's private detective firm, were unwittingly helping John Walker spy for the Soviets, Robinson said, "I don't feel like I was an accomplice, any way, shape or form."

Robinson said she had offered to help defray part of John Walker's legal costs. His court-appointed lawyer, federal public defender Fred Warren Bennett, estimated that defense costs would total between \$25,000 and \$75,000.

Harvey has not yet made a final ruling on whether Walker is entitled to a court-appointed lawyer. His revised financial statement indicates that he has \$174,000 in assets, much of it tied up in land.

In another development, the Associated Press reported that John Walker is the listed owner of three parcels of land on the island of Great Exuma southeast of Nassau in the Bahamas. Tax officials in the Bahamas would not provide an assessed value for the parcels.

Bennett has suggested that he be permitted to remain as the lawyer in the case, but that the judge might order Walker to repay part of the costs.

In Norfolk, meanwhile, the Internal Revenue Service was granted a state circuit court order placing a \$250,000 lien on the elder Walker's property there. The IRS said he owes \$252,487.66 in back federal taxes since 1979.

In Davis, Calif., neighbors and friends of Jerry Whitworth described him as an intelligent, friendly man who kept tropical birds as pets, spent hours at his computer terminal and showed no outward signs of any wealth he may have amassed in his alleged espionage spy activities.

Two days before his arrest, Whitworth, 45, "was trimming all the hedges and making things nice," around his well-kept mobile home, a neighbor said. His wife, Brenda Reis, 30, told a neighbor on Saturday that the couple would be leaving and that movers would arrive within the next few days.

Reis, a doctoral student in nutrition at the University of California at Davis, would not talk to reporters yesterday. "Leave me to carry on with my life," she said as she left the couple's green mobile home bordered by rose bushes in the Rancho Yolo trailer park.

Whitworth called a family friend before his arrest and denied his guilt, the Associated Press reported.

"We talked to him [Whitworth] just a day and a half ago," Fresno resident Dave Olson said. "He never considered himself guilty."

In documents filed in federal

court in San Francisco, the FBI said Whitworth "stole classified and sensitive documents relating to naval communications and communications security from the Naval Air Station in Alameda, Calif."

Affidavits filed by the FBI go on to lay out an intricate pattern of Whitworth's assignments on Navy vessels in Hong Kong and the Philippines, allegedly coinciding with trips Walker made there.

Whitworth, who is currently unemployed, wrote to Walker to say he was looking for work as a stockbroker after considering computer sales, according to an FBI affidavit.

The affidavit alleges that John Walker, in a letter to his Soviet contact, said that "D," believed to be Whitworth, "is still not ready to continue our 'cooperation.'"

"My guess . . . he is going to flop in the stockbroker field and can probably make a modest living in computer sales," the affidavit quotes the letter as saying. "He has become accustomed to the big spender lifestyle and I don't believe he will adjust to living off his wife's income." The letter predicts that "D" "will attempt to renew cooperation within two years," according to the affidavit.

Those who knew him said they were shocked by Whitworth's arrest, but it was no secret recently in the mobile home park where he lived that something was amiss.

"The FBI was here and they would sit in my carport and change cars every four hours," said an elderly neighbor who asked not to be named. "I called it the changing of the guard."

Staff writers Barbara Vobejda, Cynthia Gorney, Jay Mathews and Chris Spolar contributed to this report.